



Recreation Department

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Shirley Canniff
Leslie Mayer
Jen Rothenberg
Phil Lasker
Scott Walker
Josh Fenollosa - Associate
Sarah Carrier- Associate

MEETING NOTICE

The Park and Recreation Commission
Tuesday, December 13, 2022
7:00 PM - REMOTE MEETING via ZOOM

AGENDA

- 1) Open Forum – Public Comment
- 2) Review of Planning Departments CPA Requests Relevant to Park Commission Properties – David Morgan and Claire Ricker
- 3) Request for Support Resolution for National Grid Repair Environmental Impact – David Morgan
- 4) Public Arts Request – Cecily Miller
- 5) Capital Project Updates
 - A - Spy and Parmenter Playgrounds
 - B - Robbins Playground Design
 - C – Arlington Reservoir Phase II
 - D - Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project
 - E – Hurd Field Project
 - F – Poets Corner
 - G – Arlington Court Needs Assessment
 - H – FY 2024 CPA Requests – Hills Hill, Menotomy, Turkey Hill
- 6) Approval of Minutes – 10/25/2022 & 11/8/2022
- 7) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:
 - a) Open Space and Recreation Plan
 - b) Historical Commission Discussion - Menotomy Rocks Park
 - c) Off Leash Program Review
- 8) Correspondence Received: Hills Hill MTB (Various Correspondence), Lina Haddad (Wellington Park/Maintenance)
- 9) New Business

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.
When: Dec 13, 2022 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcufumhpzgqG9Qb0sSEmTORzHHIMoceOY0h>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

From: Cecily Miller <cecily.apa@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/07/2022 11:52 AM
Subject: Re: permission to place historic marker in park locations

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Hi Joe,

I wrote to you back in March about REMEMBRANCE OF CLIMATE FUTURES/ARLINGTON, a public art project that I've been working on for more than a year and you requested that I fill out the public arts request form for our proposed park locations. At the time, I had so much going on that I set this aside. Now we are at the installation phase and hoping for a positive review by the Parks Commission; we've had markers fabricated for 23 locations around town. Three are planned for park locations:

- Spy Pond Park
- Menotomy Park
- Thorndike Park

I've attached the public arts request form, although I emphasize that the request comes from the Arts Commission, so it is a bit circular. We definitely have approval to proceed from the Arts Commission, whose members have been briefed regularly about this project during my monthly reports.

I've also attached a PDF with photos of the proposed locations. There are two options for the Spy Pond Park and the Menotomy Rocks Park markers; if possible, I would appreciate the Commission approving both, and our installation team of Tom Starr and several interns will decide in the field which is more effective. If the Commission feels strongly about one or the other, please let us know and of course we will be guided by that recommendation or decision. We've discussed the Spy Pond locations with Karen Grossman, who is excited to bring this to the Park. I'll send an update on the Menotomy Rocks marker to contacts there as well.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Briefly, the project consists of 23 circular aluminum markers placed in a variety of locations across the town. These markers describe imagined events STILL IN OUR FUTURE as if they were in the past. That is, as if people 50 years in the future were looking back on this time of climate change and commemorating important moments. The project is designed to show passersby the possible impacts of climate change on the landscape and community of Arlington

These markers are part of a regional public art project developed by Tom Starr; he is installing similar markers in Trustees of Reservations and Mass Audubon properties as well as in other cities/towns. In Arlington, all the content was written by 12 Arlington High School interns working with Tom, me and Rachel Oliveri, the APS Sustainability Coordinator. A variety of grass roots community groups were consulted by the interns to develop ideas. You can learn more about the project at the website created by the interns:

<https://www.climatefuturesarlington.org/>

Let me know if you need any additional information and/or what the next steps are.

Thank you so much for your help!

Cecily

Cecily Miller

Curator, Public Art and Community Engagement

Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

www.ArtsArlington.org

617.331.1715

On Thu, Mar 17, 2022 at 12:51 PM Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:

Hi Cecily,

Please fill out the attached public arts request form and I will present to the Commission at an upcoming meeting.

Thanks,

Joseph Connelly, M. Ed.

Director of Recreation

Town of Arlington

Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

From: Cecily Miller <cecily.apa@gmail.com>

To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Jenny Raitt <JRaitt@town.arlington.ma.us>, Stephen Poltorzycki <steve@stevepolt.com>, Stewart Ikeda <stewartikeda@gmail.com>, Rachel Oliveri <roliveri@arlington.k12.ma.us>

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 2022 15:02:25 -0400

Subject: permission to place historic marker in park locations

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Hi Joe,

I've been working for almost a year now on a project to raise awareness about the impact of climate change on Arlington. Briefly, the project consists of 23 circular aluminum markers placed in a variety of locations across the town that note events STILL IN OUR FUTURE as if they were in the past. That is, as if people 50 years in the future were looking back on this time.

Q

These markers are part of a regional public art project developed by Tom Starr; in Arlington, all the content was written by 12 Arlington High School interns working with Tom, me and Rachel Oliveri, the APS Sustainability Coordinator. A variety of grass roots community groups were consulted by the interns to develop ideas. You can learn more about the project at the website created by the interns: <https://www.climatefuturesarlington.org/>

OUR REQUEST

We would like to place markers in Menotomy Rocks Park and Thorndike Park. I have a PDF which shows you the marker and the proposed locations. These locations have been reviewed and approved by Jenny Raitt and Adam Chapdelaine.

It is possible that we will submit one additional request to place a marker in Spy Pond Park, but if possible I would like to move forward with a request for permission for these two markers now.

Let me know if you need any additional information and/or what the next steps are.

Thank you!

Cecily

Cecily Miller
Curator, Public Art and Community Engagement
Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture
www.ArtsArlington.org
617.331.1715

Attachments:

File: park_locations.pdf	Size: 2130k	Content Type: application/pdf
File: Arlington Commission Arts Culture Proposal.pdf	Size: 381k	Content Type: application/pdf

PUBLIC ART GUIDELINES

Town of Arlington, MA

Adopted by the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture on February 6, 2015 and approved by the Park and Recreation Commission on March 10, 2015

This document is intended to outline a policy for the commissioning and decommissioning of works of public art in Arlington and to define the responsibilities of the Artist(s) and Agency (public or private) involved in each project.

All public art installations, both temporary and permanent, will be reviewed by Arlington Public Art (APA), Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (ACAC), the Board of Selectmen (BoS) and in the case of parks and open spaces, the Parks and Recreation Department. Each public art project will also be brought before neighbors and abutters for discussion by way of open meeting.

Procedures are as follows:

- 1) Artist or Agency of artwork generates a brief proposal and a budget to present before Arlington Public Art (APA). The proposal must include:
 - a) Brief description of the project specifying location on private or public property, and connection to the community or environment where it will be installed (Attach design if already prepared). Please be sure to have the owner of the proposed display location sign off on the application that they are aware of your proposal.
 - b) List Artist(s), organizations, subcontractors or community members involved in the project, contact information and qualifications. (Attach resume or samples of previous work where applicable)
 - c) Identify neighborhood, Town, or partner organization and contact (i.e. Friends of Spy Pond Park or East Arlington Livable Streets).
 - d) Timeline for installation and duration of the project (permanent or temporary, if temporary, specify length of installation, or performance dates)
 - e) Description of the materials, size if applicable, and space specifications (Structural drawings and site plan may be required and attached before final approval and commencement of construction)
 - f) Proof of durability and maintenance plan
 - g) Plans for ensuring public safety and liability coverage if applicable (Certification by structural engineer may be required and attached before final approval and commencement of construction)
 - h) Budget specifying funding sources and amounts for fabrication, installation, maintenance, signage, contingency, and removal if necessary. Any cost overruns are the sole responsibility of the artist.
- 2) Upon preliminary approval by APA, the artist submits a comprehensive design to APA and the owner of the proposed display location.
- 3) Artist presents design at a public meeting of community members, neighbors and abutters convened by the APA in order to receive their input and discuss any concerns. Artist makes any necessary adjustments to the proposal or design pursuant to the meeting and resubmits to APA and the owner of the proposed location. Any necessary structural drawings, site plans, and certifications not previously submitted must also be submitted at this time.
- 4) For art on public property, APA submits proposal to the ACAC, which will put the item on the BOS and/or Parks and Recreation agenda. Artist will likely be required to attend that meeting in order to answer any further questions. Terms of agreement will be addressed in accordance with attached PUBLIC ART AGREEMENT template.

- 5) For art on private property, it is recommended that artist and property owner enter into written agreement in accordance with the attached PUBLIC ART AGREEMENT template.

The following PUBLIC ART AGREEMENT template will be used to create a written record of the project for the artist and the property owner/Town, and filed by representatives of APA and the ACAC, to be referred to in the event that decommissioning, modification or removal of the project needs to take place.

PUBLIC ART TERMS OF AGREEMENT
Town of Arlington, MA

Name/Description of Artwork: _____

_____ Remembrance of Climate Futures/Arlington is a project developed by the Arlington Commission for Arts

_____ and Culture in collaboration with Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development and Arlington

_____ Public Schools Sustainability Coordinator. 12 High School interns worked with artist Tom Starr to develop markers

_____ commemorating events that may be in our future as climate change unfolds in Arlington. Goal is to educate the public about the impact of climate change on our landscape and community.

Location _____ Three park markers are currently proposed at Menotomy Rocks Park, Thorndike Field & Spy Pond Park

_____ Tom Starr and 12 High School interns, working with Cecily Miller/ACAC Public Art Curator and Rachel
Name of Artist(s): _____ Oliveri, Arlington Public Schools Sustainability Coordinator

_____ cecily.apa@gmail.com

Email Address _____

_____ c/o Town Manager, Town Hall, 730 Mass Avenue, Arlington 02476

Mailing Address _____

_____ 617-331-1715

Phone # _____

Name of Agency (Property Owner) : _____ Town of Arlington

_____ Email Address

_____ Mailing Address

_____ Phone #

Community partner org: _____ Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

Contact person _____ Cecily Miller, Public Art Curator

Email Address _____

_____ cecily.apa@gmail.com

Mailing Address _____

_____ Phone #

Community partner org#2(if applicable): Arlington School Office of Sustainability

Contact person Rachel Oliveri, Coordinator

Email Address roliveri@arlington.k12.ma.us

Mailing Address Arlington High School, Arlington, MA 02476

Phone # _____

Property is (Circle one) Publicly owned Privately owned

Artwork is (Circle one) Temporary Permanent

If temporary, please specify duration: three years

Date fabrication/construction will begin: june 1, 2022

Planned installation/completion date: November, 2022

Planned removal date (if applicable): october 31, 2025

Materials (include info on durability and any anti-vandalism properties):

the markers are custom fabricated out of heavy duty aluminum, 1/4" thick and 8" in diameter. They are designed

to be durable in outdoor spaces and have been/will be installed in other towns and on Mass Audubon and Trustees of

Reservations properties as part of regional implementation of variations on the same project led by Tom Starr.

Plans for public safety during fabrication and installation:

Marker design and placement have been reviewed for safety by Dan Warren, Operations Manager, Arlington DPW

Note that plans for installation have been reviewed and approved by Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

Design, Installation and Cost of Signage will be the responsibility of the:

Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture
(Specify Artist or Agency)

Maintenance will be the responsibility of the : Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture
(Specify Artist or Agency)

Liability will be covered by insurance belonging to the: Town self-insurance
(Specify Artist or Agency)

7

Unless otherwise specified, Artist is fully responsible for any loss, theft, damage, or injury that may occur during the construction and during the life of the installation. The Artist certifies that this work is original and does not infringe on the copyright or rights of any person and that every effort to ensure quality, durability, and safety of the artwork will be made.

The Agency (public or private) agrees to make a reasonable good faith effort to maintain the integrity of the artwork and to notify the Artist, Arlington Public Art and the Arlington Cultural Commission, in writing 90 days prior of any alteration (excepting repairs) or removal of the artwork. The Arlington Cultural Commission will consult the original proposal on file to ensure that all participating organizations are also notified. The agency agrees that criteria for alteration (excepting repairs) and removal might include:

1. Excessive deterioration beyond reasonable repair
2. Discovered to be fraudulent
3. A threat to public safety
4. Change in use of space making artwork no longer appropriate
5. Excessive and recurrent vandalism

The Artist should be given the following options when applicable:

1. Reinstallation of the work in an appropriate location if costs are mutually agreeable
2. Opportunity for documentation or reproduction of the work
3. Opportunity for community celebration of the work with invitations made to all participants and community partners as well as members of the public

The Artist(s) will have 30 days to respond. Once a plan is agreed upon, written notice should also be given to the community through the local newspaper 60 days prior to alteration or removal.

All parties to the agreement will retain the right to publish and distribute photographs of the work for promotional, educational or scholarly purposes. No party may reproduce the work for commercial use without written permission from the other signatories on the agreement. All photographs and reproductions must credit the artist, title of work, year of creation, site and town where it is installed, and include any acknowledgments specified below.

Acknowledgements Required (i.e. funders or sponsors):

Funded by a grant from the Metropolitan Planning Council.

Signed by:

X

N/A

Artist (Signature)

Artist (Print Name)

Email Address

Mailing Address

Phone #

Date

Signed by:

X

Cecily Miller

Agency Representative (Signature)

Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

CECILY MILLER

Agency (Print Name)

cecily.apa@gmail.com

Email Address

c/o Town Manager, Town Hall, 730 Mass Ave, Arlington, MA 02476

Mailing Address

617-331-1715

Phone #

November 2, 2022

Date

Attachments (Check all that apply. Indicate N/A if Not Applicable):

X Proposal (Required)

X Design (Required)

N/A Proposed Location Notification of Owner (Required)

N/A Budget (Required)

N/A Structural Drawing

N/A Site Plan

N/A Liability Insurance Certificate



Proposed area: Menotomy Rocks Park

Options:

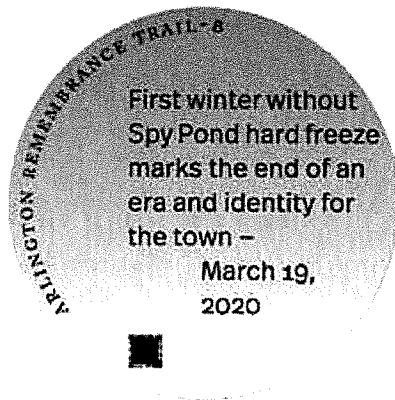
Pine grove (preferred) -- marker will be attached with loose arbor lock and checked annually to adjust for tree growth.

Single dead tree.



Proposed area: Spy Pond Park

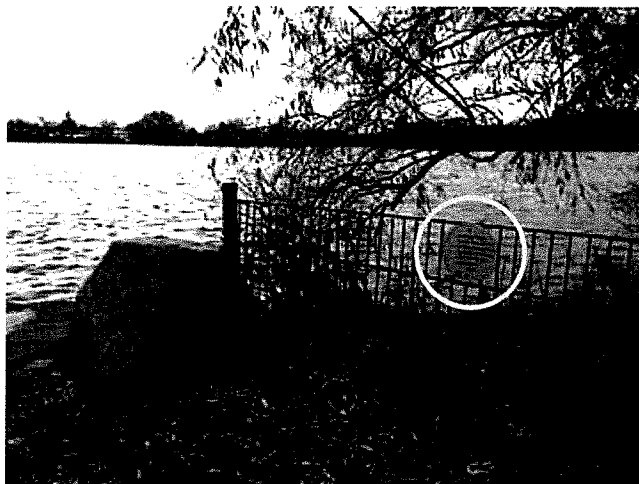
Spy Pond Freeze: during the review discussion intern Greta Mastro requested that we find a location closer to Spy Pond Park and with the pond in view for the marker commemorating the first winter with no hard freeze. She scouted out OPTION 1: this sign pole near Linwood Circle. This pole location has been reviewed and approved for safety by Dan Warren.



OPTION 2:

Fence at entrance to Spy Pond Overlook

This location is deeper into the park and closer to the playground.





Proposed area: Thorndike Park

Options:

Pole at entrance/exit of parking lot serving Thorndike Field



Note:

Medallion is facing the wrong way in this photo; we recommend facing text in same orientation as "no litter" sign already on the pole.

We will ask DPW if they can relocate or replace the trash barrel.

December 6, 2022

Members of the Conservation Commission:

We are writing to express our dissatisfaction with the process that led to the most recent suggested changes to the Conservation Commission's by-laws (Draft Wetland Regulations 11/18/22).

The Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) has continued to make a significant effort to ensure that other town bodies and commissions are aware of discussions we are having regarding any shared properties. We have a liaison from your commission attending our meetings in an effort to keep open lines of communication and avoid situations like this.

The most recent move of the Commission to add artificial turf to the list of prohibited materials in jurisdictional areas comes as a major surprise to the PRC. That an action of this magnitude was not brought to our attention by the Conservation Commission liaison and without any outreach for a preliminary discussion is very disappointing.

We believe we have built a partnership with yours and other commissions in Arlington to create dialogue that ultimately serves the best interests of our entire community. The PRC is frustrated that a conversation wasn't initiated sooner. The message you've sent is that you are not interested in our input and are closing the door to discussion about future decisions as well.

We ask that you slow this process down and allow time for input from the PRC as well as from residents of the Town of Arlington. We would have afforded you and them the same courtesy.

Sincerely,

Members of the Park & Recreation Commission
Phil Lasker
Leslie Mayer
Jen Rothenberg
Shirley Canniff
Josh Fenollosa

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES

November 8, 2022

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday November 8, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Scott Walker, Sarah Carrier and Josh Fenollosa. Mr. Lasker was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

Anticipated Speakers: David Morgan

Preliminary Matter: Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission assistant chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

Open Forum: N/A

Review of Planning Departments CPA Requests Relevant to Park Commission Properties : Tabled. Mr. Morgan could not be in attendance. Discussion will be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

Request for Support Resolution for National Grid Repair Environmental Impact : Tabled. Mr. Morgan could not be in attendance. Discussion will be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

- Ms. Mayer noted that the request does not reference Park and Recreation properties.
- Ms. Canniff questioned whether CPA was required to notify abutters of application requests. Ms. Mayer, a CPAC member, stated that CPA is not required to notify abutters unless the funding is approved and the project moves forward.

Capital Project Update :

Spy and Parmenter Playgrounds

- Parmenter equipment is fully installed, waiting on poured in place rubber, pathway completion, mulch, and fencing.
- Mr. Connelly spoke with the sub-contractor who stated that the black binder surfacing will be installed next week allowing the playground to open. The colored topcoat will be completed in the spring. Mr. Walker inquired if opening the playground for use before the topcoat was installed would affect the warranty. Mr. Connelly stated that there are conditions in the contract for this.
- Spy equipment is being installed, mulch installed, waiting on poured in place scheduling, fencing
- All Dumor site accessories are delayed until December. Due to delays contractors will not book work until equipment is received.
- The mulch and rubber have been tested and sent to Conservation for review.
- No completion date is available at this time, but substantial completion is anticipated by Thanksgiving.

Robbins Playground

- 11/5 on site kick off public feedback session held, approximately 100 residents stopped by.
- The agency fielded lots of questions and feedback. A preliminary survey is out to the public.
- 11/14 is the first public input session. Schools have been notified, abutter notices mailed, and a town notice was sent out.
- The Commission will stress that the project incorporates Universal Design Principals but is not a Universal Design Playground. Mr. Connelly will be meeting with Cambridge DPW to discuss

maintenance issues with Universal Design Playgrounds.

- Mr. Fenollosa asked if a conceptual design would be shared at the public input session. Mr. Connelly said that even a conceptual design is not presented at this stage.

Arlington Reservoir Phase II

- The handrails to the bridge are complete.
- Small punch list items remain and will be discussed with KZLA. The list includes a full replacement of one of the showers and repairs or replacement of the countertop.
- The temporary fencing will remain in place until spring to allow for the reseeded areas to grow.
 - Planting replacement in spring
 - Interpretive sign for fishing dock
- Please note that the contract for vacuuming the porous asphalt is out to bid. Mr. Fenollosa requested a description of what the vacuuming entailed. Mr. Connelly explained that it was a condition requested by ConCom as part of the maintenance for the porous pavement.

Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project

- Bishop is open. Sealcoating will be completed in the spring.
- Stratton passed inspection and will open on Monday, November 14th. Some minor adjustments will be made in the spring.
- Equipment is being installed at Peirce. The playground could potentially be ready to open on November 21. Temporary mulch surfacing will be installed for school year. Rubber will be installed in the early summer. Sealcoating will take place in the spring
- All site furnishings are installed at the sites. The accessible spinner element at Peirce will be closed until spring due to potential damage from use on a mulch surface.
- All three schools to be open within three weeks of the anticipated completion date.

Hurd Field Project

- The path is complete. Sod is being installed this week. Irrigated is installed and will be tested this week. Most of the fencing is complete. Lights installation is complete.
- There is an issue with Eversource and the utility pole move and replacement which is delaying work of the entry plaza.
- The field will be substantially completed this fall with a potential opening in May or June of next year.
- Mr. Connelly did visit the site during the heavy rains over the past couple of weeks to see how the drainage was working. He noted that there was puddling during the storms but revisited the site the following day and the area was dry.

Poets Corner

- Mr. Connelly will meet with Belmont Hill and the Archdiocese Thanksgiving week.
- Data is being accumulated from the gas meters and GeoTeck (spelling ?) testing.
- Ms. Garnett noted that the data had not been forwarded to ConCom.
- Mr. Connelly shared that all feedback so far has been positive, with one exception. A citizen expressed concern about giving up space to private schools and limiting access to the public. Mr. Connelly explained that the project in fact helps the town gain usable space.
- A public meeting will be scheduled to update the public on status.

Playground Safety Inspections 2022

- Buzzell, Hibbert, Hills, Thompson School inspections are complete. Repairs are underway.
- Mr. Connelly noted that the process for auditing and funding has allowed for repairs to be completed quicker than in the past.

CPA Requests – Hills Hill, Menotomy, Turkey Hill

- All recreation requests were submitted by deadline. Mr. Connelly did include the documentation from 1945 including the eminent domain language.
- The first CPA meeting was held on November 2.
- CPAC allowed for comments from residents during the meeting regarding Hills Hill.
- Ms. Mayer provided an update : CPA received a record number of applications this year. There is not enough funding for all the project requests. Some projects were put on hold because of how the project was categorized and presented. All three Recreation projects were deemed “eligible”. The public contingency spoke in opposition to Hills Hill. Ms. Mayer believes that the three Recreation projects will be invited to submit a final application. She also noted that the Legislature did approve additional funding to support CPA. The amount has not been determined.

Approval of Minutes: Tabled. A quorum was not present.

Special Event Approval : The Somerville Homeless Coalition is requesting to host the annual sleepover at Florence Field on November 18. Officer Joseph Canniff will be present. Mr. Connelly shared that the event has been successful in the past and the group follows all conditions including clean up. Ms. Canniff stated that going forward the event would continue to be held in the fall because it is a crucial time of year for fundraising to support the homeless in the colder months.

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the event, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 3-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

Bench Donation Request : Mr. Connelly has discussed the request submitted with Mr. Puttick. The bench is located behind the other donated bench at the Reservoir. Mr. Puttick requested that his wife’s name include her maiden name. The quote that will be included in the dedication has been shortened to fit the bench.

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the bench dedication, as updated, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 3-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

Ms. Garnett stated that during a walk on the berm at the Reservoir she noticed areas that were unstable and was wondering if there was a work order for repairs.

- Mr. Connelly has consulted KZLA for an inspection and requested a cost estimate from Semco (?) but did note that there are limitations on repeated repairs to a natural berm.
- Ms. Mayer also noted that there is signage at both access points stating that the berm is not accessible.

Mr. Fenollosa inquired about the draft documents for the courts study.

- Mr. Connelly explained that there will be a needs assessment to look at existing conditions and recommendations for usage. Public feedback will also be taken into consideration. There may be potential for “court complexes” for multi-use in addition to dedicated use courts.
- Mr. Walker inquired about the expected budget. Mr. Connelly shared that he will potentially need to combine two years of feasibility money to pay the expected \$20-25K.
- Ms. Garnett noted that Grove Street is well used because it is lit. Mr. Connelly encouraged support of the Musco Lighting System which allows a designated person to control when the lights go on and off and set

timers.

Comments and Items for Future Meetings:

- Open Space and Recreation Plan – Update will be provided when plan is available.
- Historical Commission Discussion, Menotomy Rocks Park – The Historical Commission will submit a request in writing in regards to the benches. Mr. Connelly has already consulted Town Counsel.
- Off-Leash Proposal at Parallel Park – Town Counsel has advised that there is nothing in the DCR lease agreement restricting use for recreation purposes. If the Commission decides to move forward, a public input session will be held to collect feedback from abutters. Ms. Garnett and Mr. Fenollosa noted that they have both seen off-leash dogs at the park midday. Ms. Mayer suggested that a discussion be held to reevaluate the off-leash dog program. Mr. Connelly shared that the ACO has resigned and the position is currently vacant. The Commission will discuss the issue further at a future meeting.

Correspondence Received:

- Mr. Connelly received many pieces of correspondence regarding Hills Hill. Additional correspondence was received after the agenda was published and will be added to the next agenda.
- A request for lighting at North Union was received. Mr. Connelly noted that lighting plans require that all elements are illuminated. Ms. Mayer inquired if a feasibility study should be conducted to determine the cost to implement a plan at all playgrounds/parks. Ms. Canniff will research other towns lighting installations. Mr. Fenollosa asked who absorbs the cost of the electricity? Mr. Connelly stated that if the Recreation charges a fee, for example at the Reservoir, then the Recreation Department pays the electricity costs. However, if the location is free for public use, the cost is covered by the town,

New Business:

- Ms. Mayer attended the maintenance group meeting and shared concerns about the direction and impact on the budget and DPW. The group was initially started by Jim Feeney and then continued by Emily Sullivan with the purpose of evaluating maintenance needs and standards for all town property. Ms. Mayer noted that the group did not focus on items that were Recreation based. Ms. Garnett suggested that the group be invited to a future PRC and ConCom meeting before the study is released to discuss the limited focus and available funding. Mr. Connelly will add the discussion as an agenda item for a future meeting when David Morgan is available. The Commission agrees that a more unified approach is necessary.
- Mr. Fenollosa inquired about the work being done at Mt. Gilboa and Cooke's Hollow. Ms. Garnett noted that both are ConCom properties, not Recreation. Ms. Mayer noted that both projects received CPA funding approval last year. The projects were initially brought to CPA by town citizens. CPA requests that citizen requests be sponsored by an official town entity, commission or committee. ConCom sponsored the projects. Ms. Garnett stated that she will bring feedback to ConCom that more oversight is needed at each location.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn at 8:26pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Rothenberg – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes

- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES

October 25, 2022

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday October 25, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Phil Lasker, Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Shirley Canniff, Sarah Carrier and Josh Fenollosa. Mr. Walker was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

Anticipated Speakers: Nicholas Boit, JoAnn Robinson, Peter Howard

Preliminary Matter: Phil Lasker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

Open Forum : N/A

Pond Lane Project Proposal : Nicholas and Belinda Boit presented plans to improve esthetics and drainage at their home located at 20 Pond Lane, abutting the AB Crew area. Due to excessive flooding the Boit's are planning to remove the asphalt on the property and replace it with crushed stone and water-friendly trees such as yellow birch. They are also contemplating fencing off the area between the properties and hoping to remove the guardrail installed at the site. The Boits are offering to do this at their own expense. The Commission expressed support for the project but requested that the Boit's consider additional plantings in lieu of a fence to create a natural buffer zone.

- Mr. Connelly stated that AB Crew is in the process of hiring a contractor and getting pricing.
- Mr. Fenollosa suggested that a more engineered solution may be needed to control the flooding in the area. The area is one of the lowest points in Arlington according to GPS maps.
- Mr. Connelly will reach out to DPW regarding removal of the guardrail and set up a meeting with the Boits and the tree warden.

Ms. Mayer made a motion to approve the plan to beautify the area, remove the asphalt and install crushed stone and plantings, pending approved by the tree warden. Seconded by Ms. Canniff.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 4-0.

Menotomy Rocks Park Historical Commission Discussion : Mr. Connelly provided a summary of the discussion; A request was received for new benches to be donated at MRP. A meeting was held to discuss the location for installation. DPW removed the two old, green benches and poured the concrete slab for the new benches. Friends of MRP expressed concern over the removal of the benches as they feel that they are historical.

- Mr. Howard presented a history of the original 5 benches, installed in the 1930s. Since that time 13 memorial benches have been installed with the approval of the Commission. Mr. Howard was hired privately by the FOMRP to repair and restore the benches over the years. The FOMRP and the Historical Commission were not consulted prior to the removal of the two benches. Mr. Howard is requesting that the Commission preserve the "historical fabric" of the park by replacing the two benches with similar customized benches that he located through a Connecticut company costing about \$2500-2600 each.

- Ms. Robinson also expressed her concerns about the removal of the benches stating that the Commission should consider a new location for the accessible benches and install benches similar to the originals at the site. She also stated the FOMRP is willing to pay for the benches as part of a compromise.
- Mr. Connelly reviewed the ADA requirements, maintenance needs and costs.
- The Commissioners discussed the definition of a location and it's attributes being defined as historical as well as maintainability and longevity of the elements within the park and must be acknowledged when considering DPW involvement. Standardizing the elements of Arlington parks will assist DPW in addressing and performing effective maintenance.
- Ms. Rothenberg noted that FOMRP had installed many "non-historic elements" in the park without the approval of PRC.
- Mr. Connelly did complete a walkthrough with Judy Weinberg prior to the removal of the benches. He also spoke to Doug Heim who did state that MRP was not under historical jurisdiction.
- Ms. Carrier believes that accessibility and historical preservation should not be mutually exclusive and urged for a compromise.
- Ms. Robinson stated that an inventory of the park and it's historical designation is in process.
- Ms. Garnett shared her experience working with DCR stating that historic and contemporary needs must be evaluated for effective compromise.
- Ms. Melofchik applauded Ms. Robinson and Mr. Howard for their dedication to MRP and stated that she wants the Commission to install replica benches at the original location.

The benches have been ordered and the concrete slab has been poured. The Commission will not remove any additional benches until there is a plan in place. Mr. Connelly will meet with Mr. Howard. Mr. Connelly will be reaching out to the Friends groups to reinstate quarterly meetings with PRC.

Special Event Approval : N/A

Minutes : Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the minutes of 10/11/2022, as amended, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 3-0.

Correspondence Received: Several letters regarding Hills Hill were received regarding the project, the public process and the EcoTrack. Correspondence was also received regarding bicycle riding on the path at Spy Pond. Mr. Connelly will follow up with the Bicycle Committee for recommendations. Ms. Canniff shared that in a recent trip to London she noticed that there was signage stating that no bicycles or dogs were permitted in parks.

Comments and Items for Future Meetings: Mr. Connelly is following up with Town Counsel regarding DCR research on off-leash dogs at Parallel Park. Mr. Connelly will forward the RFP to the Commission regarding the basketball court for feedback. Ms. Canniff stated that the Open Space meeting is scheduled for Thursday evening to discuss the Open Space plan. Ms. Rothenberg cannot attend the upcoming Public Management Group meeting. Mr. Lasker and Ms. Mayer offered to attend in her place. Mr. Connelly has discussed the CPA request with David Morgan. The Commission will discuss the CPA requests at the next meeting.

New Business: N/A

Ms. Mayer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:16pm, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg.

Roll call vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 4-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

From: Elaine Crowder <ecrowder@communication-exchange.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Sandy Pooler <SPooler@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/14/2022 09:44 AM
Subject: Fwd: Holes

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Hi Joe,

I was thrilled to see the no-trail-building signs placed at Hill's Hill large enough, and semi-permanent enough to communicate that the Department and Commission means business. Thank you for this. Clear messaging is important.

I do have to report that the extremely hazardous hole reported below on 10/24 remains unfilled (see new pictures attached, along with the old pictures showing scale relative to an approximate 2.5 foot bat found nearby). I am aware that there was a best effort to deconstruct and fill holes along the trail parallel to Summer St. Thanks again!

As for the priority hole I reported in the first paragraph below (with pictures), not only might kids hit their constructed jump wrong, or slide on slippery leaves and be catapulted into this hole, but the hole could fill completely with leaves and be invisible, as happened a few years back on the access road or asphalt trail along route 2 resulting in a fatality.

I remain willing to show you where this hole is. I'll come by this morning (11/14) after 9:45 am to discover a best time to walk over to Hill's Hill together.

I know that you and the Commission care deeply about solving issues you've experienced that impede maintenance in the parks. I would welcome further conversation on this topic. On it we agree, along with the Commission's forward thinking work on universally designing playgrounds beyond "checking the ADA box" !

Thank your for the amazing elements you and the Commission have included at the Stratton playground, the highlight of which is a wheelchair accessible merry-go-round that because of its flush universal design ends up being utterly safe for kids of all ability levels. No longer can kids, balls and other things get caught underneath. It's the essence of universal design - designing with a range of abilities in mind results in better design for all.



Best,
Elaine Crowder
TMM Pct. 19

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Holes

Date:2022-10-24 20:18

From:Elaine Crowder <ecrowder@communication-exchange.com>

To:Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Reply-To:ecrowder@communication-exchange.com

Hi Joe,

I'm sure you would like to know about an extremely hazardous hole that has made an appearance at Hill's Hill. It is located on the down slope exiting from the middle of the meadow toward the bike path. There is a largeish rock to the left of a grassy path leading down to the hole. It is about 2.5 feet deep and wide, large enough to trap a kid. See attached pictures.

Also if you walk the trail paralleling the main trail on the Summer St. side you will see about four excavations. Dirt from these has been used to create a jump on a previously flat trail.

I'm happy to show you where these things are any morning this week.

Also looking forward to seeing the safety and maintenance plan for Hill's Hill as it takes shape.

Best,
Elaine

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Elaine Crowder, Ph. D.
Communication Exchange

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===

Elaine Crowder, Ph. D.
Communication Exchange
781-648-1927

Attachments:

File: <u>IMG-3328.jpg</u>	Size: 120k	Content Type: image/jpeg
File: <u>IMG-3327.jpg</u>	Size: 119k	Content Type: image/jpeg
File: <u>Hill's Hill Hole01_NovIMG-3414.jpg</u>	Size: 6232k	Content Type: image/jpeg
File: <u>Hill's Hill Hole02_Nov_IMG-3415.jpg</u>	Size: 5924k	Content Type: image/jpeg

23

Hi,

I just want to voice my support for this project. The area of land has no real purpose as of right now aside from people throwing their trash and old furniture into it.

The area is great because people can park at the rink and its right off the bike path. It gives kids a safe spot to actually ride. I think this is a much better option than the Crusher lot, which is extremally steep and littered with glass.

Thanks,
Chris Davies
67 Paul Revere Road,
Arlington, MA 02476

Sent from Mail for Windows

24

From: Christine Aquilino <chrisaquila@comcast.net>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/09/2022 11:13 PM
Subject: Save Hill's Hill.

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Dear Joe Connelly, Director of Parks and Recreation, Arlington:

I understand that there is a proposal to turn Hill's Hill into a mountain bike park. I don't understand what that would be, but there are plenty of places for mountain bike riders to ride. I see them at Whipple Hill in Lexington and at Turkey Hill (near my house).

I walk on Hill's Hill with my dog. While it is sometimes full of trash, I don't see how turning this into a mountain bike park would improve this small parcel. Keep the land free for walking and the wildlife who are losing so much habitat. Don't they have priority anywhere anymore?

Christine Aquilino
81 Edmund Rd.
Arlington, MA 02474

25

From: Robin L Bergman <robinforp12@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/17/2022 11:07 AM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I have serious concerns about the initial proposal to build a mountain bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods,

Please ensure any bike project excludes construction (beyond trails) in the woods, as described in the Eco Track alternative.

A pump track would completely decimate the entire wooded area. It's unrealistic to think that it could be built around all or most existing trees. Just getting all the heavy equipment up there alone would wipe out many trees. I say this as a homeowner who just had my water line replaced and my lawn, side front lawn, garden, trees and entire front and side walk were completely decimated by just one digging machine! Please relocate the pump track on a flat open space nearby.

Thank you,

Robin Bergman
Park Avenue
Town Meeting Member, Precinct 12

26

Stephen DeCoursey, Len Diggins, Eric Helmuth, John Hurd, Diane Mahon
Select Board Arlington

Dear Select Board,

How do we get the Select Board on the same page as Mayor Wu, Governor Elect Healey, President Biden and UN General Secretary Guterres? Forests and woodlands are essential to public health and sustainability. We must preserve them. They help buffer extreme heat; they can act as cooling centers as we saw in 2022.

Hills Hill has a great impact on extreme heat and storm water absorption. Hills Hill is part of the Mill Brook Linear Park running along the Mill Brook trajectory: Reservoir, Hurd Field, Buck Field, along bike trail, Hills Hill, Wellington Park, Buzzell Field, Cookes Hollow, Meadowbrook Park.

Please, best use of limited municipal resources begs consideration of Hills Hill preservation with an eye to establishing a children's forest resource/education center. Having been obtained via eminent domain for the purposes of a children's playground or recreation center and recognizing the imminent realities and demands of climate breakdown Hill's Hill is a forest resource for the entire community. Let's preserve the much-needed forest part.

Allow consideration for a universally designed forest eco center for children and youth. This would be the first such universally designed resource in Arlington offering access and enrichment to children and youth and adults of varied abilities.

Please do not allow repurposing of Hill's Hill for a pump track and mountain biking park. Park and Recreation parcels are town owned properties. They are community resources and deserve the full consideration of the community's needs and of climate realities. Currently Hill's Hill offers passive forest recreation to a myriad of users. Let's first understand what we have before potential topographic change and tree canopy degradation is enabled.

Consideration of repurposing of a town owned property should initiate a tree inventory and an independent environmental impact study. Thank you

Please enter this into Correspondence Received.

Kind regards,
Beth Melofchik, Town Meeting Member, Pct 9

27



New England Mountain Bike Association

17 November, 2022

Arlington CPA Committee
Town of Arlington
Arlington, MA

Dear CPA Committee Members,

I am writing to you to voice my extremely enthusiastic support of the funding proposal before you for the mountain bike skills park at Hills Hill. I am a long-time Arlington resident, a passionate mountain biker, long-time member and Board President of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA), and I teach sustainable trails design and construction.

My two adult children, Sam and Eliza Glick, both grew up here in town. Both are also mountain bikers. Both would have benefited greatly from having a fantastic resource like this skills park proposal here in our town. Mountain biking is a sport with many different facets but if you've never tried it, perhaps the closest analogy is trail running. Importantly, 99.9% of mountain biking is not what you see on TV: people jumping their bikes off cliffs or trying to catch "big air". Most mountain biking happens at about the same speed as trail running on the same type of singletrack trails used for hiking and trail running. Mountain bikers seek the same experience of other trail users: be in nature and protect the natural resources that make recreational trails possible.

On my mountain bike I have explored and connected many town open spaces with nearby trail systems over the past 25 years. Speaking from personal experience, Hills Hill, has suffered from benign neglect by the town for at least that long. It has consistently been used as a party spot, trash and neighborhood yard waste gets dumped there, it has a very healthy and robust poison ivy collection, many of the trees are invasive Norway Maples, and like many public parcels, has many people who do appreciate it in unique and unknown ways.

This bike skills park proposal represents a tremendous opportunity to turn Hills Hill into a great, new recreational resource for Arlington. From what I have heard, there has been a large amount of misinformation about what construction of a bike park would entail – including clear-cutting the parcel. I can tell you as one who designs and constructs recreational trails, the last thing you would do is clear-cut. You make every effort to incorporate the trail system into the landscape and, importantly, protect the existing resources, like trees, whenever possible. All the skills parks I am aware of nearby and around New England are harmonious with their landscapes and exist within and among trees.

26



New England Mountain Bike Association

The very preliminary, feasibility proposal that was shared does just that. Hills Hill has the additional benefit of its proximity to the playing fields and the bike path. Having this next to the baseball and soccer fields means that siblings who aren't playing in a baseball or soccer game have a great, safe, adjacent recreation option. Hills Hill is also designated as for recreation by Arlington's youth – the proposal is a creative application of this intent. Even better is that mountain bike skills cross generational lines. I can think of few other sports where you could have a teen teach an adult a new skill. I believe there will be a lot of demand for this resource from riders of all ages.

Another important consideration is that after construction, bike skills parks create community and a sense of stewardship of the resource – over time this should result in minimal cost to the town for maintenance. Additionally, the local NEMBA chapter, Greater Boston NEMBA is very likely to be involved on an ongoing basis assisting with ongoing upkeep and building the culture of stewardship for the bike park – as well as a volunteer resource for appropriate pieces of its construction. Last, the design process should be allowed to proceed to determine the optimal configuration of the skills park.

We should be doing everything we can to get kids outside into the woods – and on bikes. This proposal does both. I strongly hope you will fund it – it will be a great asset for Arlington. Perhaps even more importantly, this sends the message to some brave kids in town who made this request a little over two and a half years ago, that the adults heard them and want to help make this a reality.

Respectfully,

Adam Glick
President, New England Mountain Bike Association
42 Robbins Road
Arlington, MA

29

From: Ryan Katofsky <rkatofsky@gmail.com>
To: Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>
Cc: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>, jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us, C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>, sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com
Date: 11/23/2022 12:38 PM
Subject: Re: [sustainable-arlington] Hill's Hill

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Apologies in advance for a long-ish email, but if you are like me and haven't been paying close attention to the Hills Hill MTB project, you might find this info helpful. I will start off by saying that my initial reaction upon hearing about the project was positive. That said, I can appreciate the concern over the loss of tree cover and open space, so I finally took a look at the project proposal to try to understand a bit better what the impact would be.

According to the proposal, the project is estimated to affect about 11% of the undeveloped portion of Hills Hill (0.65 acres out of about 6 acres), meaning 89% would remain untouched. Some of that 11% already appears mostly vegetation free based on the aerial photographs in the link above (about 0.18 acres, where the "pump track" would go). The other two main areas that would be developed are right along the bike path and adjacent to the soccer field, most of which looks to be wooded (some of it is also full of poison ivy, if memory serves). Those areas total 0.41 acres (~7% of the undeveloped portion). The project would also include a new multi-use path. Other bits within that 11% are the existing trails.

So it seems to me that one way (but not the only way) to think about the project is whether about 0.4 acres of land use change, and the associated tree loss, is a good trade-off for what we'd get. How you answer that question is partly objective and partly subjective, for sure, but I think it is fair to say that we're talking about a relatively modest change and that the property would remain largely intact.

This is separate from whether we should spend CPA funds on this or something else, on which I have no opinion. Either way, I don't think this changes the town's budget because the money is earmarked for CPA projects and would be spent anyway, right? Please correct me if I am wrong.

Lastly, as an aside, looking strictly at greenhouse gas emissions, the best thing we can do with our parking lots is put solar canopies over them. Even if you planted trees on those parking lots, the solar panels would avoid far more carbon emissions than what the trees would soak up.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone!
Ryan

30

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 1:41 PM Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org> wrote:

I work with indigenous people in the tropics to restore forests and it is a shame that a privileged community like Arlington is repurposing a wooded area for recreation.

Maybe a parking lot can be converted into a mountain biking circuit (or whatever they are making)

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 1:17 PM sue sheffler <ssheffler247@gmail.com> wrote:

As a very involved Arlington resident since the 80's, I STRONGLY object to this project and priority. We most need OPEN SPACE/natural woods in our dense town. I raised 3 kids here, I understand the interest...but this is a terrible use of resources. How about setting aside some small funds to maintain the space for birds/walkers/ fresh air???

Thx, Sue Sheffler
26 Kensington Park

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31

From: Jane Hammer <janemhammer@gmail.com>
To: C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>
Cc: Ryan Katofsky <rkatofsky@gmail.com>, Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>, sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>, "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>, "sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com" <sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com>
Date: 11/23/2022 01:44 PM
Subject: Re: [sustainable-arlington] Hill's Hill - do a low impact multi-use trail system, no pump track; dump the company currently consulting

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I appreciate being kept updated on this. Let us know if there is some way to act. I support the cheaper, more ecologically leaning idea...I think kids and adults need more not fewer neighborhood wild spaces to creatively recreate in...

Is there an ecological reason for the pump track replacing a dirt trail that's been used for years?

On Wed, Nov 23, 2022 at 1:38 PM C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com> wrote:

Hi Ryan: Thanks for the email. At this time where this project would represent close to 10% of our projected Town budget deficit AND represent a controversial loss of trees/plants/wild open space AND there is a better alternative, we should go for the better alternative: legalize multi use trails, without loss of trees, on the parcel. I have heard this called the 'eco track' solution. It is elegant because it would allow mountain bikers, like me, walkers like me and taxpayers, like me to have a perfectly good solution.

Dear Director Connelly: I believe there are those in the Parks and Recreation Department who do want to see a mountain bike use at Hill's Hill. Please start by the much cheaper option of just utilizing trails - no expensive, wasteful development of pump tracks etc. The firm being considered currently is not the right one- just look at their website. Something like has been done in all the other communities around us would be far better, less destructive and far cheaper.

Thanks,
 Carl Wagner
 Town Meeting Member, Precinct 15

From: Ryan Katofsky <rkatofsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2022 12:37 PM
To: Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>
Cc: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>; jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>; sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com <sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com>
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33

From: C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>
To: Ryan Katofsky <rkatofsky@gmail.com>, Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>
Cc: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>, "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>, "sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com" <sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com>
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Carl Wagner
Town Meeting Member, Precinct 15

From: Ryan Katofsky <rkatofsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2022 12:37 PM
To: Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>
Cc: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>; jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>; sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com <sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [sustainable-arlington] Hill's Hill

Apologies in advance for a long-ish email, but if you are like me and haven't been paying close attention to the Hills Hill MTB project, you might find this info helpful. I will start off by saying that my initial reaction upon hearing about the project was positive. That said, I can appreciate the concern over the loss of tree cover and open space, so I finally took a look at the project proposal to try to understand a bit better what the impact would be.

According to the proposal, the project is estimated to affect about 11% of the undeveloped portion of Hills Hill (0.65 acres out of about 6 acres), meaning 89% would remain untouched. Some of that 11% already appears mostly vegetation free based on the aerial photographs in the link above (about 0.18 acres, where the "pump track" would go). The other two main areas that would be developed are right along the bike path and adjacent to the soccer field, most of which looks to be wooded (some of it is also full of poison ivy, if memory serves). Those areas total 0.41 acres (~7% of the undeveloped portion). The project would also include a new multi-use path. Other bits within that 11% are the existing trails.

So it seems to me that one way (but not the only way) to think about the project is whether about 0.4 acres of land use change, and the associated tree loss, is a good trade-off for what we'd get. How you answer that question is partly objective and partly

34

subjective, for sure, but I think it is fair to say that we're talking about a relatively modest change and that the property would remain largely intact.

This is separate from whether we should spend CPA funds on this or something else, on which I have no opinion. Either way, I don't think this changes the town's budget because the money is earmarked for CPA projects and would be spent anyway, right? Please correct me if I am wrong.

Lastly, as an aside, looking strictly at greenhouse gas emissions, the best thing we can do with our parking lots is put solar canopies over them. Even if you planted trees on those parking lots, the solar panels would avoid far more carbon emissions than what the trees would soak up.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone!
Ryan

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 1:41 PM Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org> wrote:

I work with indigenous people in the tropics to restore forests and it is a shame that a privileged community like Arlington is repurposing a wooded area for recreation. Maybe a parking lot can be converted into a mountain biking circuit (or whatever they are making)

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 1:17 PM sue sheffler <ssheffler247@gmail.com> wrote:

As a very involved Arlington resident since the 80's, I STRONGLY object to this project and priority. We most need OPEN SPACE/natural woods in our dense town. I raised 3 kids here, I understand the interest...but this is a terrible use of resources. How about setting aside some small funds to maintain the space for birds/walkers/ fresh air???

Thx, Sue Sheffler
26 Kensington Park

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To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to sustainable-arlington+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com.

To view this discussion on the web visit

<https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/sustainable-arlington/CABT576RwBi36W3q%3D9hg8uMB%3DFzD5fPHk%2BXHUt%3DJAJ3j21fcQ9Lg%40mail.gmail.com>.

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www.aidindia.org



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From: Alice Bennett <ab.bennett147@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/18/2022 03:21 PM
Subject: Fwd: Preserve Hills Hill

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Alice Bennett <ab.bennett147@gmail.com>
Subject: Preserve Hills Hill
Date: November 18, 2022 at 2:32:46 PM EST
To: jwayman@town.arlington.ma.us, jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us

Please do not consider going forward with building a mountain bike trail and pump track in this very small, limited open space with native species and many trees. This is an exceedingly expensive proposition of value to a very small segment of our population. It is not evident how others could share this space as a bike trail...no birders, no dog walkers, no small children or anyone wishing to commune with the natural world. The price alone is astronomical considering more important needs our community. I have been a tax payer in Arlington for over 40 yrs and this is the biggest waste of money I have ever seen considered. The space is already being compromised by self entitled folks in favor of this. Once this precious open space is gone there is no replacing trees, etc. should this fiasco go forward.

Alice Bennett

36

From: Tom McCaughtry <mccaughtry@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/20/2022 02:35 PM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I have serious concerns about the initial proposal to build a mountain bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods,

Please ensure any bike project excludes construction (beyond trails) in the woods, especially a pump track in the meadow at the top of the hill.

Thank you,
Tom

37

From: Somnath Mukherji <somnath@aidindia.org>
To: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>
Cc: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us, C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>, sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com
Date: 11/22/2022 01:41 PM
Subject: Re: [sustainable-arlington] Hill's Hill

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Thx, Sue Sheffler
26 Kensington Park

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To view this discussion on the web visit

<https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/sustainable-arlington/CABT576RwBi36W3q%3D9hg8uMB%3DFzD5fPHk%2BXHUt%3DJA3j21fcQ9Lg%40mail.gmail.com>.

--

www.aidindia.org



30

From: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Cc: sue sheffler <:ssheffler247@gmail.com>, C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>, sustainable-arlington@googlegroups.com
Date: 11/22/2022 01:17 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill

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Thx, Sue Sheffler
26 Kensington Park

39

From: Laura Kiesel <lakiesel@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/03/2022 11:07 AM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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Hello Mr. Connelly,

As an Arlington resident and natural resource scientist/conservation biologist by degree and training, I have serious concerns about the proposal to build a recreational bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods. As you may know, we have less than a decade to avert catastrophic climate change and we have already incurred quite an unacceptable amount of global warming that will wreak ecological devastation due to our collective inability to prioritize the preservation of forests and wetlands over development. As a nature enthusiast and avid birder/wildlife watcher, I am also concerned as to the impact of this proposed project on our dwindling wildlife. We are already facing a mass extinction and bird species are profoundly impacted and at great risk (and we rely on birds and other wildlife for our own survival as a species). This area of Massachusetts provides precious resources and habitats for both resident and migrating birds. Habitat fragmentation and development, along with climate change, is one of the most prominent threats to bird species. Finally, I'd like to say as a disabled person, it's quite tiring to see the priority more abled people get for their recreational preferences. A mountain bike tract offers a premium avenue of recreation usually enjoyed primarily by people of **great privilege**--white, younger (though not usually children) and often able-bodied--not to mention, it is a hobby that tends to draw more affluent people--while likely being inaccessible to many people with disabilities and lower income people. Not only that, but I suspect this will make the area somewhat less accessible overall. Also, I want to clarify: wildlife tourism offers way more revenue to the town than any mountain biking opportunities could ever do. Our owls and eagles have drawn people from all over the state and even other parts of New England and the Northeast. Hill's Hill is currently habitat to hawks and barred owls and many songbirds, which may be compromised by this development. Here is an op-ed (by a former colleague of mine) on the threats mountain biking poses to wild lands and wildlife:

<https://www.thewildlifeneews.com/2019/06/18/impacts-of-mountain-biking/>

40

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thank you for your consideration.

On Thu, Nov 3, 2022 at 11:18 AM Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:

Thanks Laura I will pass this on to the Commission.

I will say that anything we do at Hills Hill will 100% make the area more accessible for everyone not less. Any project we undertake takes into consideration ADA requirements and universal design principles.

Although we can discuss and disagree on the other elements of the project, saying that it will be less accessible to those with disabilities is not accurate.

Joseph Connelly, M. Ed.
Director of Recreation
Town of Arlington

Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

From: Laura Kiesel <lakiesel@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: Thu, 3 Nov 2022 11:06:46 -0400
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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<https://www.thewildlifeneeds.com/2019/06/18/impacts-of-mountain-biking/>

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Kiesel

41

From: Laura Kiesel <lakiesel@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/03/2022 12:21 PM
Subject: Re: Concerns about Hills Hill

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Thanks for the prompt response. But I think it's important for those in municipal positions to listen to those with disabilities and not discount them as I am sure we are thinking of things that may not even be on your radar.

The needs of the disabled are dynamic and varied and not completely covered under current laws, statutes and standards. I am glad to hear that the project would take into consideration universal design (though want to point out, that is for the project itself--it does not usually consider that project in the broader context and its larger impacts environmentally and socially). But I want to clarify ADA is very dated/limited in its breadth and scope of what it defines as accessible (it is after all, a 30+ year law that has not yet been updated and was only considered a first step when it was passed).

It just has not been my experience that all projects green-lit by the Town (or other municipalities) result in increased accessibility (either during the project implementation and after completion). For instance, for someone like me with serious heat intolerance, I am less likely to visit areas with less shade trees available during warmer weather to retreat under. For someone like me, with sensory issues and mobility challenges--anything that results in the ramping up of the "traffic" of an area (whether foot traffic, bike traffic, etc.) and crowding of an area that increases noise and opportunities to get hit by someone or something--is going to be less accessible to me. I can't count how many times I have had cyclists and skateboarders run into me on the bike path and even on Mass Ave sidewalks (where they are not supposed to be)--and have sent me into the gutter or dirt paths to avoid them. I have learned that in most places where pedestrians share space with bikers, the latter are often aggressive and careless, endangering the safety of the former--and this risk is compounded for those of us with mobility issues or other disabilities. And I am thinking of next door in Cambridge where the bus lane on Mass Ave has wiped out many handicap accessible parking spaces. Since we're still in a pandemic but mask mandates are down on public transit, those of us who can't take the bus due to being immuno-compromised (or for other disability access reasons since some 80%+ of MBTA bus stops are not handicap accessible) now can't travel into Cambridge since there are limited places for us to park.

42

I'd also like to mention that the Town's own overnight street parking ban was harming disabled people--though the Town's own Disability Commission would not endorse a waiver program to exempt those with handicap parking placards from the ban. It was something I and the disabled community had to not only bring to the table, but argue hard for.

Green spaces are critical for public health and they are something people of greater economic privilege can afford--either by having their own private yards, or to travel to. Disabled people are more likely to be of limited economic resources. They are less likely to drive and own cars. This means, they do not have the privilege of being able to drive farther to access green spaces, are less likely to have homes with private yards and gardens, and it's critical to have public green spaces locally available in close proximity to reap those health benefits.

I remember when the development project of Whittemore Park was being debated and many people, including disabled people who reside directly across the street in the Arlington Housing Authority's main residential building--testified needing to maintain trees and their accessibility to that space--many people (including Town officials) were responding they could "just go" to places like Beaver Brook, Habitat or Menotomy Rocks Parks instead--again, assuming they have cars and resources and spoons to travel. And I remember one wheelchair user couldn't even access the Select Board's chambers to offer a public comment on that project because it was not accessible to her. I remember when the Town was proposing the beer garden they intended for that space, I asked that they have adequate seating for disabled people and I was assured by several SB members there would be. There was not any such seating actually, at least the times I checked it out. I remember the Mass Ave project being touted as a great boon for accessibility. But instead I remember a many months-long experience where those streets were barely traversable on foot, and it was impossible if you were in a wheelchair/scooter, had a rollator, or were pushing a stroller (And if you lived on Mass Ave like I did, you lived with many consecutive nights of jack hammers and apt shaking, inducing migraines with no notice even as it was mandated by law). I also remember the Mass Ave project coincided with the exponential increase of the use of rodenticides (including in my affordable housing complex) as advocated initially to landlords by our own Board of Health, a trend that has continued and claimed the lives of bald eagles (a MESA listed species) and Great Horned Owls within our town's borders.

Finally, disabled people are at much greater risks to the effects of climate change and as such, I think it's important to consider the long-term consequences of projects that bring us ever closer to the brink of runaway global warming. Arlington already is in an area prone to flooding and microbursts (the latter of which I as a low income tenant sustained apt damage from that went months without being remedied that also adversely impacted by health)--and that vulnerability needs to be considered.

Thanks for listening,

Laura Kiesel

43

From: joan robbio <jrobbio@verizon.net>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/04/2022 09:10 AM
Subject: Proposed Hill's Hill Park

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

We are writing to let you know that we would like you to reconsider the use of Hill's Hill and instead of a Bike Park to keep it as open green space.

Arlington has so few areas where the habitat contains such a remarkable ecosystem full of native trees and plants – and this area is on its way to returning to the original oak-hickory forest with the native plants it once contained. It would be a shame to disrupt this one of very few green spaces in our special Town.

Thanks so much for your consideration of this request.

All our best.....Joan and Jim Robbio, 4 Bradley Road, Arlington 02474

44

From: Gayle Namchuk <gaylenamchuk@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/03/2022 10:58 AM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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I have serious concerns about the proposal to build a recreational bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods. Especially siting a pump track at the top of the hill.

Please ensure this project puts Nature first as proposed in the Eco Track alternative.

Thank you,
Gayle Namchuk
64 Wright St, Arlington

45

From: Heather Remoff <heathertr@comcast.net>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/03/2022 09:01 AM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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Publicly owned land should serve the public. I often walk that section of the bike path and love to see young people enjoying that parcel of *land just as it is*. They ride bikes, they hike and explore. We need natural environments. *And young people need to design their own sense of fun in natural environments*. They don't need specially designed "recreational bike paths." Let the woods grow. Let young people grow and discover on their own.

Heather Remoff 1 School St., Unit 407, Arlington 02476

I have serious concerns about the proposal to build a recreational bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods.

Please ensure this project puts Nature first as proposed in the Eco Track alternative.

Thank you,

46

From: Leslie Mayer <blmayer@msn.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/03/2022 09:46 AM
Subject: Fwd: Email about mountain biking at Hill's Hill and pump tracks

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FYI - you can add this to the correspondence received regarding Hill's Hill.
Leslie

From: Sue Doctrow <srdoctrow@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022, 9:38 AM
To: Alexander Franzosa <abobzosa@gmail.com>; Clarissa Rowe home <clarissa.rowe@comcast.net>; Julie Wayman <jwayman@town.arlington.ma.us>; F. Swanson David <dswanson922@gmail.com>; Pamela heidell <pamelaheidell@gmail.com>; Leslie Mayer <blmayer@msn.com>; Jo Ann Preston <ja-preston@comcast.net>; JoAnne Preston <JPreston@arlingtonhousing.org>; Robinsj <robinsj@rcn.com>; kinlau184@gmail.com <kinlau184@gmail.com>
Cc: Jim Feeney <JFeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>
Subject: Email about mountain biking at Hill's Hill and pump tracks

Dear Committee members,

A friend in Arlington who is familiar with mountain biking found out too late that there was going to be public comment last night and was not able to attend. She asked me if I'd pass this email along that she sent late in the day to Jim but it ended up caught in my spam folder so I could not send it until now.

My intent is not to discuss this by email, of course, but just to share the information. I'm sure we will receive more feedback on this project in the coming months.

All the best,

Sue

Begin forwarded message:

47

From: Karin Turer <karin@tugboat23.com>
Subject: Fwd: In support of the mountain bike facility at Hill's Hill

Date: November 2, 2022 at 10:30:52 PM EDT

To: Srdoctrow@gmail.com

Hi Sue,

Trying again to send this along!

Thanks,

Karin T

From: Karin Turer <karin@tugboat23.com>

Subject: In support of the mountain bike facility at Hill's Hill

Date: November 2, 2022 at 4:09:55 PM EDT

To: jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us

(please share with the rest of the committee)

I am a 15+ year Arlington resident and have a son at the Gibbs. Our whole family is in favor of making Hills Hill a more welcoming and accessible place. We live on Summer Street and find Hill's Hill to be full of trash and glass, overgrown poison ivy, ungraded trails, and antisocial activity. I have seen the way a mountain bike presence has actually helped clear areas of cruising, teen drinking, and extra off-trail use. I have seen this in the area west of the Sheepsfold in the Fells, which used to be a haven for cruising. I have also seen this in the Land Locked Forest in Lexington/Burlington/Bedford, where unsafe trails full of old boards, rusty nails, and ping-pong tables were replaced by well-graded, volunteer-built trails that are welcoming to all users - walkers, joggers, and/or bikers.

Hill's Hill is a parcel that has some nice features but the lack of investment has let undesirable uses overwhelm it. A pump track takes up very little space, is built to fit in with (and not replace) mature trees and the natural environment, and would provide multi-age recreational opportunities (I believe Hill's Hill was donated to the Town for recreational purposes). There is a wonder pump track in Chelmsford at Russell Mill and a brand-new one added in Acton, MA, that are excellent examples of natural land being enhanced in this way. I am happy to bring people to these spaces to understand a bit more about woods use. I feel like there is a lot of exaggeration and misunderstanding about the impact of mountain biking, but it is a wonderful lifetime sport and an excellent physical outlet for children and teens who can't do team sports (either through lack of desire, lack of funds, or lack of time for the often-intense commitment required).

48

My apologies for the late message; I was unaware until today there was a CPA meeting related to this project as I am only on the Parks and Rec list for this.

Best regards,
Karin Turer and family
525 Summer Street

PS: Here are some photos from Russell Mill and a proposal from the Acton pump track which gives more background. Also a video from the recent opening of a "skills park" in Uxbridge. Arlington can be a leader in joining the communities who recognize this excellent outlet for our youth and families.



49

From: Alice Bennett <ab.bennett147@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/02/2022 01:58 PM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

CAUTION: This email

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I have serious concerns about the proposal to build a recreational bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods.

Please ensure this project puts Nature first as proposed in the Eco Track alternative.

I also have questions about how this space would/could be shared should it become a mt bike path...dog walkers, enjoying the quiet peace and shade, walking about with kids or older folks...??possible with bikes buzzing by??

Lolly

50

From: Sarah Bjorkman <sarah@bjorkman.us>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/01/2022 05:55 PM
Subject: Concerns about Hills Hill

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Dear Mr. Connolly,

I have serious concerns about the proposal to build a recreational bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods.

Arlington has precious little natural space remaining. In the midst of a climate crisis, replacing native plants and trees and displacing wildlife is a terrible idea. We cannot afford to develop this area.

Once this green space is gone, it's gone.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bjorkman
116 Hillside Ave.

51

From: Michael Jacoby Brown <mjbrown246@gmail.com>
To: Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>, Beth Melofchik <tankmadel@yahoo.com>, spooler@town.arlington.ma.us, Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 11/02/2022 12:02 PM
Subject: Please do NOT use CPA for Hills Hill Mt. Biking

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Hello, I have another event long planned for tonight so cannot attend tonight's CPA meeting. I ask that our CPA money NOT be allocated to build a Mountain Bike track in Hills Hill. The money would be community destruction not preservation, when we have so little areas that have just trees and everywhere else is built up. In fact a development next to Hills Hill destroyed many trees about 10 years ago. I have lived about 100 feet from Hills Hill for over 20 years and often walk thru it. There are many needs in Town to PRESERVE and Community Preservation Money, I think, should be used to **preserve** some of our resources, not to destroy them! I can think of many resources in the Town that need preserving and in need of preserving. (the Boys and Girls Club, among others come to mind in terms of recreation, and has the only pool in Town serves many more children than any mountain track would!,) Just one example and I think you could think of many more!

I have a short video I shot on my camera of two young boys who ask that the Town not change anything in Hills Hill. I was walking by when I saw them on their bikes on Washington Street just outside Hills Hill, near my house. They "mountain bike there now and in a few minutes on the video say how they like it as it is and hope the Town will keep it that way." The video might be too long for me to send you and I would be happy to show it to you on my phone some time you are free. I will try to send it as well. Sincerely, Michael Jacoby Brown. Town Meeting Member, Pct 17 and abutter of Hills Hill.

--

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52

From: Lina Haddad <haddad.c.lina@gmail.com>
To: JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us, SPooler@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/01/2022 05:40 PM
Subject: Our parks

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Hello ...

I am writing this email to thank everyone who was involved in upgrading Wellington Park. The native gardens are so nicely designed and the benches are amazing. Sitting by the brook is soothing. On the day I visited, a biker was lingering to enjoy the brook too.

On the other hand I would like to express concern about what parks and recreation is currently doing: upgrading several playgrounds and parks all in the same season/year, spending all our tax money. Please try giving preventative maintenance a chance prior to redoing everything at once. I hope my voice can be heard on that subject,

Thanks.

--

Lina Haddad

53